

Middletown Economic Development Advisory Committee

Wednesday, April 27, 2011, 5:00 pm

Middletown Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Joseph A. Cirillo (exp. 1/13)_x_
7 Samson Lane
Middletown, RI 02842
jac@etal.uri.edu

Robert A. Connerney (exp.1/14)_x_
9 Renfrew Park
Middletown, RI, 02842
prconnerney@verizon.net

Helen F. Flynn (exp. 1/13)_x_
57 Tuckerman Ave.
Middletown, RI, 02842
haflynn@cox.net

Liana Ferreira Fenton (exp.1/14)_x_
53 Berkeley Ave.
Middletown, RI 02842
Lianaff@aol.com

Tom Kowalczyk (exp. 1/13)_x_
9 Beechland Place
Middletown, RI, 02842
Thomas.Kowalczyk@associates.dhs.gov

Robert M. Silva (exp. 1/16)_x_
1100 Aquidneck Ave.
Middletown, RI, 02842
rmsilva@silvalawgroup.com

Mike Hill (exp. 1/13) _x_

Jody Sullivan_x_
Newport County Chamber of
Commerce – ex-officio
keith@newportchamber.com

Ron Wolanski, Town Planner – ex-
officio_x_
rwolanski@middletownri.com

Others present:

Rick McAuliffe, Mayforth Group
Evan Smith, NCCVB

Art Weber, Town Council Rep. ex-
officio_x_

Chris Semonelli, Town Council Rep.
ex-officio_x_

1. Discuss possible Newport County convention center – Evan Smith, Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Mr. Smith discussed the lack of larger meeting space on the island. Current venues can accommodate only approximately 1,000 people each.

The next step would be to consider conducting a feasibility study for a stand-alone conference facility vs. promoting development of meeting space in conjunction with a new hotel.

2. Discuss proposed modification to the town's economic development tax incentive program to address hospitality.

Mr. Silva recused himself from discussion of this matter as he represents local hotel and restaurant operators. Mr. Cirillo served as chairman.

There was discussion of the need for an incentive, given the recent and ongoing hotel development in town.

Mr. Smith stated that an incentive could be directed to promote development of meeting space in conjunction with hotel development.

Mr. Connerney questioned the need for incentives for an industry that appears to be growing.

Mr. Wolanski was asked to research tax incentive programs elsewhere.

3. Recap of March 18th visit by Congressman Cicilline.

Mr. McAuliffe provided a recap of the visit by Congressman Cicilline.

4. Discussion of May visit and tour of ACP by Governor Chafee

Mr. McAuliffe stated that the Governor is expected to visit Middletown in May 5th for roughly an hour. Details to follow.

5. Discuss status/next steps regarding RIDLT training grant.

Mr. McAuliffe provided an update on the ongoing work of SENEDIA and others on the skills gap analysis funded by the RIDLT grant.

6. Discuss possible MEDAC role in high school-business mentoring program.

Mr. Semonelli updated that committee on the mentoring program.

7. Discuss outreach, including MEDAC website and schedule of outreach meetings to local businesses.

Mr. McAuliffe discusses ideas for outreach to the local business community.

8. Update on West Main/Coddington Redevelopment Master Plan.

Mr. Wolanski updated that committee on the status of the master plan.

9. Update on Aquidneck Corporate Park improvement project.

Mr. Wolanski updated that committee on the status of the master plan.

10. Other business.

- a. Mr. Kowalczyk informed the committee about ongoing local business initiatives related to hydroponic agriculture.
- b. Discussion of Newport State Airport.
Mr. Hill stated that since the RIAC is apparently not interested in expanding runways at Newport, there is no need for further discussion.

Respectfully submitted

Ronald M. Wolanski

Director of Planning & Economic Development

